

POWERSPORTS 101:  
SMALL DEALERS'  
**GUIDE  
TO GET TO  
THE NEXT  
LEVEL**

**PX** DIGITAL



**+ 2020 E-BOOK**



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## CHAPTER ONE: I'M A SMALL DEALER—HOW DO I GET BIGGER?

Unfortunately, business growth is not as easy as asking how to grow. Expansion is a process, and it's one that needs to be carefully planned and thought out before you get in over your head. **If you are up to the challenge, you will need to start by educating yourself on how to develop a solid growth strategy and put plans in place to get to the next level of powersports operation and grow your brand.**

There are no two journeys that are the same in business ownership, and this is true for growth, as well. Your dealership is going to have different needs than the next one, and your goals will vary depending on your specific vision for your dealership. While most of the information about growth can be applied to any business, your exact goals and needs will dictate the strategies and plans that your dealership adopts throughout the growth journey.

### Growth Requires a Strategy

Business development strategies are not born overnight. These take a lot of planning and education, starting with figuring out what the goals and intentions are for your growth. You can't just wake up and decide that it's time to grow the dealership and do it. You have to take the time to learn about growth and marketing strategies that you can use in your efforts. It might even be helpful to have a quick refresher on something as simple as how to set (and define) actionable goals.

A growth strategy can be defined as any business development plan that has a projected goal of an overall business increase. **Beyond the technical, though, it's simply your plan to grow.** Just as you wouldn't start a new business without a proper business plan, you can't keep growing your business without a strategy in place. Later in this eBook, we'll talk more about the best strategies for growth and what the future of powersports means for your dealership.

### Do You Know How to Grow?

Many people want to dive into business growth without taking the time to actually learn about business development or the current state of the industry that they are in. The powersports industry is changing and that's something that you need to think about. Take the time to look at the competition and see what they are doing.

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Check out similar dealerships, even across the country or around the world, and see how they are getting the growth that you want. Typically, you'll find them online and the Internet is one of your best tools in learning about growth and how to help your business succeed. You aren't trying to do something new or create a totally redefined process. **There's no sense in doing the work yourself.** See what other brands are doing, figure out what works and what doesn't, and use that information to help develop your own business growth strategy to take your dealership to the next level.

## TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TECHNOLOGY

**One of the best growth tools available for your powersports dealership is technology.** There are a variety of different resources that are changing the way that dealerships do business, from simple things like social media marketing and virtual dealership websites to CRM and marketing platforms that can be integrated to streamline day-to-day operations. Technology is not just a perk in today's business world—it's a must-have. Get on board if you want to grow.

**CRM and other software integrations are no longer an optional choice for any dealership that wants to continue to grow and succeed.** These platforms are designed to allow for streamlined, integrated operations and will ensure that every department is on the same page across your entire dealership. It will allow you to keep all customer information managed in one place and provide a seamless experience for customers from start to finish.

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Technology has many other perks to consider, even if the simple fact that it's a necessary part of business operation isn't quite enough. **Here are a few things to keep in mind if you want to know what technology like CRM and Internet marketing can do for your small dealership and your growth goals:**

- *Creates a platform for effective dealership communications across all departments, ensuring that the customer's information is transmitted and updated effectively along the way.*
- *Allows dealerships to get rid of a lot of paperwork and separate software programs that are managing dealership operations in exchange for one streamlined, multifunctional platform that handles all aspects of the business.*
- *Guarantees a better response to growth strategies because today's customer base is largely online and to grow, you have to find your audience.*
- *A chance to control your business and its growth from a scalable platform that requires a one-time investment. Typically, every time a company got bigger, it would have to re-invest in the software it needed based on its Enterprise level. New technology solutions are scalable and future-proof, for the most part.*

Now that you know a little more about the big picture of getting to the next level, let's dig into the most important aspects to cover in developing and executing a solid growth strategy.



## CHAPTER TWO: INTERNET LEAD GENERATION AND INTEGRATION

One of the most basic elements of any growth strategy is an increased customer base. After all, you can't consider your dealership larger if you continue with a consistent customer count and can't draw in a new audience. The great thing about Internet lead generation is that you aren't reinventing the wheel. You're just going out and finding your audience, albeit in a different environment.

**The first thing that you need to understand is that you cannot continue to ignore Internet marketing and online lead generation.** This is no longer an optional practice or a "good way to drum up new business". Today's dealerships, including those that specialize in powersports, need to be online if they are going to stay alive, let alone experience any type of growth.

To get your Internet lead process running smoothly, there are some things that you need to know. For starters, it's no longer about ALSO having an online presence. Today's dealership is a modern, integrated machine that includes both its physical and Internet experience as a dynamic offering to customers. That might sound like a big undertaking, but it's really a lot simpler than it sounds.

### An Internet Manager is NOT the Answer

For starters, get that Internet Manager out of your sales department. By all means, you don't have to fire anyone, but you need to stop relying on a separate "online sales" manager or leader that isn't integrated with the rest of the sales team.

**There was a time when online sales first started that this kind of support was necessary since the Internet pro was the only one who knew about online dealerships and how to be successful.**

Today, however, the online transaction is just a satellite of the entire business brand, offering customers another way to shop when they need something more convenient or accessible. It is not a separate entity and treating it as such is only going to be detrimental to the business. While it might seem like you're doing the dealership a favor by having a separate manager and team for the Internet side of things, all that you are doing is pointing out that they are "separate" and that might make your online customers feel like they're not really a part of the business like a walk-in customer would be.

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It's called non-confidence, and it's a real problem if you are trying to get your small dealership to the next level. If you are truly confident in your future potential and the growth of your powersports dealership, customers feel that you would integrate your online sales and not even bother mentioning that there's a separate department. Everyone should know how to handle every sale, and that's all there is to it.

## Where to Begin

As we discussed in the first chapter, everything starts with a plan. You can't just dive into the Internet and hope for the best. It might seem "easy enough" to set up social media campaigns or build a virtual dealership website to help generate more leads, but you can't just go into battle without a plan. Step back, see what's working for others, and strategize.

**Although there are many aspects of Internet lead generation that you'll want to focus on, some of the biggest elements that need to be in your strategy include:**

- *A strong, interactive, **user-friendly** virtual dealership website*
- *Social media profiles and marketing campaigns*
- *Using the Internet to develop a sense of brand authority for your dealership*
- *Outsourcing and generating leads from other places (such as brand websites or related industry pages)*

One of the best ways to find your audience online is to go where they hang out. Look at things like online fan clubs and related websites. Check out forums and social networking groups dedicated to powersports and the like. Check out social media channels related to your industry and consider the merits of advertising there. You can even take advantage of local SEO to reach your local audience online.

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**70% OF COMPANIES**  
either have a digital transformation  
strategy in place or are working on one

**60% OF COMPANIES**  
that have undergone a digital transformation  
have created new business models

**55% OF STARTUPS**  
have adopted a digital business strategy,  
compared to 38% of traditional companies

**93% OF COMPANIES**  
consider innovative technologies as necessary  
to reach their digital transformation goals

**MORE THAN 40%**  
of all data analytics projects will involve  
customer experience by the end of 2020

**34% OF MARKETING LEADERS**  
believe AI will lead to the biggest  
improvement in customer experience





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There are a lot of different resources online that businesses can use for growth. You simply have to find them. In your search, remember to focus on the advice and insight that is specific to SMALL dealership growth. Practices and methods for different sizes of dealerships will vary and will not work as effectively for your smaller business.

## Try, Try Again

Perhaps the most important part of developing and integrating your Internet lead generation process is trial and error. While you can kind of get an idea of what will work based on how your competition is doing with the various lead generation tools they use, you can't guarantee that you will get the same results. Therefore, you sometimes have to just develop a strategy, try a few different methods, and see what is going to work best.

While online marketing can seem intimidating, it's actually great for this reason (among others). You can easily try and retry various marketing methods and tools until you get the right results and test out campaigns without having to make a huge investment before you know how well something will work. Some dealerships find success with certain things while others might rely on a different path. You'll have to find what works for you and that may take some failed attempts, so don't be defeated if the first plan doesn't work.

Internet lead generation is no longer a bonus way to market your powersports dealership. You need to be online to grow and solidifying the process for lead generation is a critical part of that online presence. The best thing that you can do in developing your growth strategy for getting to the next level is to implement a solid plan that includes effective lead generation tools and strategies. If you have a good plan and implement it well, leads should come easily.





## CHAPTER THREE: INTEGRATE YOUR SALES TEAMS FOR TOTAL DEALERSHIP GROWTH

The true secret to success in dealership growth is something we've touched on a couple of times, but it's so crucial that it's what is holding many dealerships back. No matter how many solid growth strategies you put in place or how hard you work to develop everything else, nothing will be effective if you don't do this one thing.

Integrate.

What do we mean? It's really quite simple, and again, was briefly discussed already. You have to **stop separating your Internet sales**. You're not a powersports dealership that also happens to offer online sales. You're a dynamic, diverse, future-proof dealership that is taking customers to the next level with it, and you have to integrate your online presence as an extension of your physical dealership, not as a "bonus" feature.

It can be difficult to keep up, considering that even five years ago an Internet sales team was considered a luxury for many dealerships and customers were excited at the prospect to buy powersports equipment online. However, today's customer has changed drastically, and technology has developed even further, creating an increased demand for dynamic businesses that operate as much online as they do in a physical setting, creating a one-stop-shop of sorts.

### Internet Sales Departments are No Longer a Thing

Online sales departments used to make things easier for powersports and vehicle dealers. They would triage the inquiries, guarantee the leads, deal with the technology so that the rest of the sales team didn't have to, and then pass along the qualified leads to the people on the sales floor. While this does seem like a rather effective strategy, it's not one that should be advertised anymore.

With that said, it's not that you have to do away with the lead filtering and online communication team that's largely responsible for handling incoming online business. You just need to quit obviously separating them from the rest of the sales team. Essentially, stop showing your cards.

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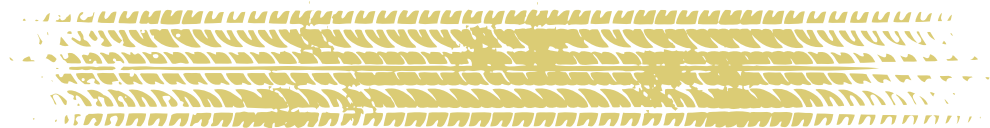
Your customers don't want an "Internet sales rep" that's just going to hand them off to a sales floor representative to finish the transaction. They want to deal with one person from start to finish. If your entire sales team isn't sourcing and servicing online leads, you're never going to make it to the next level.

## What Integration Means

Integration means no longer singling out your Internet department. It means getting rid of the mindset that an online presence is an "extra" way to drum up business and get customers in the door. It's about creating a dynamic, multi-faceted dealership that **includes** an online presence.

When you are building your growth strategy and looking for new ways to help your dealership future-proof itself and reach the next level, you have to keep integration at the forefront of your mind. You should have one business plan for your growth, and it should include all of the aspects of the process, including things like **Internet lead generation, implementing CRM software and other tools, and other online solutions that are going to help your dealership grow.**

Integration is about getting away from the separation of online and offline business. It's about giving customers a single, seamless journey from start to finish, no matter where they choose to start. You have to take advantage of the tools that are out there to give your customers the experience that they want. For today's customer, the most important element is that it is integrated, effortless, and convenient for their needs.



## Growth Time: Where Do We Start?

Now that you know more about how a small powersports dealership can begin to explore the growth process, you're probably eager to get started. As we discussed at the beginning of this book, though, you can't just dive in and hope for the best. You need to take a minute to digest this information and figure out how you can implement it to improve your day-to-day operations.

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Sit down with your key people and hash out a plan. Come up with growth goals that are actionable and measurable so that you're able to accomplish things and see progress every step of the way. It's easy to say, "I want to grow my dealership". **Doing it, however, is an entirely different story.** It's also a process and one that takes effort and planning on your part.

Start your search for the best technology and online resources that can help you with your growth goals. Any powersports dealership that's going to get to the next level needs to get on board with technology, first and foremost. If you implement the right tools and tech, after all, a lot of the growth process will fall into place on its own.

Remember, too, that you're not reinventing the wheel here. There are dealerships that have gone before you and done quite well. See what they're doing that works. Take a note from bad marketing ideas, too, if you find any of those along the way. Then, when you sit down to develop your own strategy, it will be easy for you to put something in place that will get results.

**If you want to take your small dealership to the next level, you need a next-level mindset, and that includes making the Internet and technology just another part of day-to-day business. If you can do that, you'll be on the right track in no time.**

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